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An Androgynous Babylonian Divinity.—By GEORGE A. BARTON, Professor in Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Penna.

IN 1894 I had the honor to call the attention of the Oriental Society to a Sebaean inscription previously published by the Derenbourgs, which registers the metamorphosis of the goddess Athtar in South Arabia into a god.¹ The Sabaeen inscriptions since published in fasciculi 2 and 3 of the *Corpus* make it clear that the goddess Athtar was not so much transformed in the process, as divided into a masculine and feminine deity, the name Athtar or some epithet like Tâlab Riyâm or Ilmaqquhu being retained for the masculine portion, while the feminine portion went by the name of Shamsu, and both were considered the parents of their worshippers.²

An old Babylonian inscription published by the British Museum in 1898 in Part III of the *Cuneiform Texts* (plate I, No. 12155) gives us evidence that a similar process of development took place in this goddess among the Semites of Babylonia. The inscription has been translated by Thureau Dangin³ and by Radau,⁴ but in my judgment both have failed to catch the point wherein the inscription is significant for the history of the religion. It runs :

Dingir LUGAL-RA KUR KUR
dingir NANA
NIN *dingir* NANA-RA
LUGAL-TAR-SI
LUGAL KISH
GIR KISAL
MU-NA-RU.

¹ The article was published in *Hebraica*, Vol. X, p. 204. The Derenbourgs published in *Journal Asiatique*, 8 ser. Vol. II, pp. 256-266.

² See my *Semitic Origins* in preparation.

³ *Revue d'Assyriologie*, Vol. IV, p. 74, n. 15, which corresponds to his *Tablettes chaldéennes inédites*, p. 6, n. 15.

⁴ *Early Babylonian History*, p. 125, n. 3.

Thureau Dangin translates: "En l'honneur du dieu roi des contrées et de Ishtar, de la dame Ishtar, Lugal-tar-si, roi de Kish, le mur' de la terrasse(?) a construit." Radau would render: "To the god of countries and of Ishtar, mistress of the divine Inanna,"² etc. The French savant has evidently found the names of deities in the first line awkward, while the American scholar, following other parallels afforded by this French master, seems to me to dispose of the matter in a somewhat violent manner. I would translate as follows:

"For the king of countries,
the god Ishtar;
for the lady, the goddess Ishtar,
Lugaltarsi,
king of Kish,
the structure of a terrace
has made."

The kings of Kish were evidently Semitic as the inscriptions published by Hilprecht,³ who first discovered them, show. Since

¹ Thureau Dangin reads in l. 6 BAD KISAL, where I have read GIR KISAL. The sign does not perfectly represent either one. Cf. Thureau Dangin's *Recherches sur l'origine l'écriture cunéiforme*, Nos. 364 and 367.

² Radau bases this rendering on two passages of Thureau Dangin's translation of *Galet A* of Eannadu in the *Revue Semitique*, Vol. V, p. 67 ff. In the passage to which Radau really refers, Col. II. l. 5, the French scholar translates the sign for Ishtar, (cf. the text in *Revue d'assyriologie*, pl. I) by "Inanna" largely because he was unable farther down (Col. V. 26), to render it otherwise (cf. *loc. cit.* n. 1). In reality Inanna is to Dangin only another name of Nana. Nana and Ninkharsag were, as Professor Davis has pointed out (*PAOS.*, 1895, p. ccxv.), the same goddess under different names. The passage in question in Col. II of Eannadu's *Galet* is proof of it and should be rendered: 1. 2 "nourished by the life-giving milk (1. 3) of Ninkharsag (1. 4) given a name (1. 5) by Ishtar." So also in Col. V, l. 26, the passage which suggested the rendering of Thureau Dangin I not only see no reason for reading Inanna, especially if with Radau we treat Inanna as a temple, but would read as follows: (Col. V, l. 23) "To Eanadu, (24) Patesi (25) of Shirpurla (26) by Ishtar, the mother (cf. *Recherches* No. 404), (Col. VI, l. 1) whom he loves, (2) with the patesiship (3) of Shirpurla (4) the kingship of Kish (5) was given." These parallels therefore fail to convince one that these scholars are right.

³ *OBI.* Nos. 5-10. Winckler (*Orientalische Forschungen*, II, 144), and Hilprecht (*OBI.* Pt. II, p. 56), doubt whether Kish was a real city. These doubts are now rendered unnecessary. In the inscriptions of the kings of other cities, the name Kish always has the determinative for place. Cf. Radau, *Early Babylonian History*, p. 126.

the sign employed in the inscription of Lugaltarsi to express the name of the deity is the well known sign explained in a syllabary as "Ishtar," we are no doubt right in translating it Ishtar.

Strange as such a combination of masculine and feminine qualities may seem in a deity, there are other traces of their union in one deity in ancient Babylonia. In the incantation published in IV R. 1, there occur in Col. II, ll. 25-28 the expressions: AMA A-A *dingir* EN-LIL and AMA A-A *dingir* NIN-LIL, which are translated in the Semitic lines by a-bi um-mi ša *ilu* En-lil, and a-bi um-mi ša *ilu* Nin-lil. The Sumerian evidently means "the mother-father En-lil," and "the mother-father Nin-lil," while the Semitic has turned this about and renders "the father-mother who is Enlil," and "the father-mother who is Nin-lil." Delitzsch remarks of this expression (*Wörterbuch*, p. 20), "d. h. den Namen des Bel und der Beltis, des Elternpaares Bels." The point of the expression, however, is not that they are referred to as a pair of parents but that the qualities of both father and mother are attributed to both.² In the light of the treatment of Ishtar in the inscription of Lugaltarsi this fact clearly points to a similar origin for Enlil and Ninlil. There must have been a time when masculine and feminine qualities were attached in popular conception to this deity while as yet its name had not been differentiated, just as they were attached to Ishtar in the time of Lugaltarsi.

There are two phenomena in connection with the Phoenician pantheon which suggest a similar development there. An Ashtart of Sidon is called "Ashtart of the name of Baal" as though there were a time when both were represented by the same name (see *CIS.* 3¹⁸), and Tanith of North Africa is constantly called in the inscriptions "Tanith of the face of Baal" as though there had been a time when they ascribed both masculine and feminine characteristics to their deity, and from that time there had survived an idol of a goddess with a bearded face. (See *CIS.* 195, and *passim.*)

¹ II R. 59, 12e, f. Cf. Brünnow's *List*, No. 3051.

² Abi-ummi in the sense of maternal grandfather, (Strassmaier's *Cyrus*, No. 277, l. 4), has of course a different origin.